

**The newsletter
for all
clarinetists in
the DMV!**

June 23, 2023

Clarinetfest 2023

It's not too late to register
for the Clarinetfest 2023.

The ICA will celebrate its
50th anniversary from July
5-9 at the Westin
Westminster in Denver
Colorado. For more
information visit:
clarinet.org

**Local vendors will
include:**

Rovner

The Reed Machine

Lohff and Pfeiffer USA

Rice Clarinet Works

and many more.

MD Clarinet News

Maryland Clarinet Society

Featured Clarinetist of the Month

Seth Kibel



Seth Kibel is one of the most versatile, in-demand woodwind players in the Mid-Atlantic region, on clarinet, flute and saxophones. Originally from Yorktown Heights, New York, Kibel graduated from Cornell University in 1996, moved to Alexandria, Virginia that year and Baltimore in 2001. Kibel led the Alexandria Kleztet, which recorded four albums from 1999 – 2009, all winning Washington Area Music Association (WAMA) awards for Best World Music Recording. His other awards from WAMA include Best World Music Instrumentalist, 2003 – 11, Best Jazz Instrumentalist seven times from 2005 to 2014, and Best Children's Music Recording in 2014 for *Jazz for People Who Are Shorter Than Me*. Kibel's composition "New Waltz" won grand prize in the Songwriters Association of Washington's Mid-Atlantic Song Contest in 2017. In 2002, Kibel was commissioned to write the score for the theater piece *Dreams of the Golden Country*, performed at the Kennedy Center. He composed and wrote lyrics for all the songs on his 2017 album *Songs of Snark & Despair*. In addition to his klezmer band (re-named Seth Kibel & The Kleztet), he plays in Bay Jazz Project, Music Pilgrim Trio, The Natty Beaux and numerous other ensembles.

Clarinet Trivia!

What year was the clarinet invented?

Who was the conductor of the NBC Symphony when David Weber was a member?

Do you know the scientific name for clarinet cane?

What year was the phonograph invented?

Who invented the clarinet?

Name 10 brands of clarinet reeds.

What tuning level are historic clarinets tuned to?

Email us your answers and the first 3 correct submission win a free pack of mouthpiece patches.

thereedmachine@gmail.com

Seth Kibel: Jazz, Klezmer & More.

Q & A with Seth

Q: How did you learn to play the clarinet? A: In fifth grade I chose flute, but my two older brothers told me that no brother of theirs was going to play an instrument for girls. I returned the flute and got a clarinet. In retrospect I'm glad, because clarinet is near and dear to my heart. I played in the school band and took lessons with a local clarinetist named Alan Bramson on and off for twelve or thirteen years. These lessons were mostly classical, with a bit of dabbling in jazz. We worked on the traditional clarinet repertoire – Mozart, Weber, Brahms, Klose. Bramson was a great guy and a big influence. He was always trying to get me to say what I liked and didn't like and geared the lessons that way. I've tried to use that same approach with my students.

Q: What made you decide to become a professional musician? A: I certainly wasn't a prodigy. In high school I started playing in bands and got more of the music bug. I went to Cornell not intending to become a musician. I thought I might go to law school. I double majored in American studies and music. Even at graduation I didn't intend to go into music full-time, but then I had an epiphany. I realized that nothing gave me as much joy as music. I figured I'd give it a go. Well, that was 27 years ago, so I guess that ship has sailed.

Q: How did you start playing klezmer music? A: During sophomore year of college I saw a sign on a bulletin board that said, "Make Your *Bubbe* and *Zaide* [Yiddish for grandmother and grandfather] Proud. Join a Klezmer Band." I had never been exposed to klezmer music. I found records in the Cornell library and fell in love with how fresh and new and exciting the music sounded. Later I joined the band Cayuga Klezmer Revival. We made an album and toured a bit, including a concert at Town Hall in New York City. My first training in klezmer was on the job but I've made myself a serious student of the music ever since.

Q: How did you start playing jazz on the clarinet? A: My early jazz education came from WBGO-FM in Newark, New Jersey, but they didn't play many records by jazz clarinetists. In my early years I thought that you played classical on clarinet and jazz on sax. My middle school band director said that to play jazz I had to switch to sax. The first non-classical music I played was klezmer, but shortly after college I played in a band called Air Mail Special, whose leader was really into Benny Goodman.

Q: Please describe the bit where you take the clarinet apart while playing. A: I was inspired by a story in the book *Searching for Buddy Bolden* about an early New Orleans jazz musician who would take the clarinet apart piece by piece, down to the mouthpiece, while playing. It works better in the klezmer context than jazz. It's a bit of smoke and mirrors, a little embarrassing, but people like it, so what the hay. I actually get complaints if I *don't* do it.

Clarinetfest 2024

Dublin, Ireland

July 31-August 4

Interested in going to Clarinetfest 2024 in Dublin, Ireland? Maryland Clarinet Society is organizing an official Maryland clarinet choir for the trip.

The group will be made up of local clarinetists of all levels including college, high school, current and retired military members, and professionals.

This will be an exciting trip designed to be educational and entertaining.

If you are interested in participating, please email **Robert DiLutis at:**
thereedmachine@gmail.com

Q: What equipment do you use? A: I use an R13 Greenline clarinet; D'Addario mouthpiece; D'Addario Reserve classic reed, 3.5; and Rovner platinum gold ligature.

Q: What have some of your favorite performing experiences been? A: This past year I played a set on clarinet at Jazz Fest in New Orleans, in the blues tent with Bill Kirchen. That was a real treat. In 2007 I toured Chile with my klezmer band on behalf of the State Department, which was loads of fun. I've done four tours of Europe with (pianist) Daryl Davis, mostly on sax, but he likes to feature clarinet on a couple of numbers.

Q: I know that you do a lot of teaching to retirees. Please tell us about that.

A: I started teaching at the Peabody Elderhostel, which became Road Scholar. I've mostly taught for Osher Lifelong Learning at both Johns Hopkins and Towson Universities. I enjoy it, especially since I always loved history. They really appreciate it. I'm like the Justin Bieber for old Jewish ladies. Among the courses I've taught is Clarinetists of the Swing Era (Benny Goodman, Artie Shaw, Woody Herman, Buster Bailey, Jimmy Dorsey and the Ellington clarinetists, Barney Bigard and Jimmy Hamilton). I've also taught classes on just Benny Goodman.

Q: Please tell us about some of your recent projects. A: I've put out a couple of EPs. I put out a digital album earlier this year on which I play mostly clarinet. It's called *ClariNetflix & Chill*. I'm hoping that Netflix sues me. I'll get a lot of mileage out of that.

By: Bob Jacobson, Former vice president of Baltimore Jazz Alliance

UPCOMING EVENTS

Clarinet Academy of America

Featuring YaoGuang Zhai, D. Ray McClellan, Robert DiLutis and David Drosinos, and Ben Redwine, July 10-14, Riversdale House Museum, Riverdale, MD for more information visit:

www.clarinetaacademyofamerica.com

Klarinets for Kids

Come listen and learn everything you ever wanted to know about the clarinet. Concerts, crafts and more. 12-2pm, July 10-14, Riversdale House Museum, Riverdale, MD

Legendary Articles

Clarinet Tone by David Weber - Part 1

Originally published in *Woodwind Magazine* (1952)

Edited by Ed Joffe

The problem of developing a good tone is a very controversial one largely because of disagreement over what or whose is a good sound. **The first and most important step in producing any kind of tone is to have in your mind's ear a clear conception of the tone that you want to reproduce.** Without this important conception, all the books and articles giving technical advice lose most of their usefulness. This first step in deciding what tone he/she wants is of paramount importance. The decision can be reached very simply by listening to various players and determining what kind of sound is desired.

I believe that the great difference in tone produced by French and German clarinetists is largely mythical. The clarinet has its own peculiar quality of sound and the nationality of the clarinetist, or the make of the instrument, doesn't affect it very much. The good French clarinet player gets a good tone and the bad player a bad one. The same goes for the German clarinet player. The good instrumentalists of both nationalities produce a very similar kind of tone. For example, in the New York Philharmonic recording of the Khachaturian *Marquerade Suite*, principal clarinet Simeon Bellison plays a German Oehler clarinet without any of the thickness we have been led to expect from the German school. Mr. Robert Lindemann, the Germanic-schooled principal of the Chicago Symphony who also plays an Oehler clarinet, offers a further refutation of this popular misconception on the recording of *On the Shore of Sorrento* by Richard Strauss. These men produce a beautiful tone and so does Philadelphia Orchestra principal clarinetist Ralph McLean, who plays a Buffet clarinet and is of the French school.

Of course, the musician must have a good instrument without which it would be difficult to get the best results. The most vital part of the equipment is the mouthpiece. Concerning the mouthpiece, I would like to mention a few important things:

1. See that the chamber is not too shallow because it will tend to give a bright sound.
2. The chamber should not be too deep, either, as this makes the tone dark and tends to sharpen the high register.
3. The bore should be suited to the make of the clarinet. For example, using a big bore mouthpiece on a small-bore clarinet will throw off the intonation. A small-bore mouthpiece on a big bore clarinet will have the same result.

Now we come to the embouchure. I have found through experience that the double lip embouchure (both lips covering the teeth) gives the best results, although I have occasionally heard clarinetists who get good results with the single lip embouchure since there are always exceptions to the rule. There is only one important muscle that we should be concerned with regarding the embouchure—the orbicularis oris. (There are minor accessory muscles, but they are not of primary importance.) This muscle is so constructed that the fibers of the lower lip interlace with the fibers of the upper lip at the corners of the mouth. They form a sphincter or circular muscular band. The sides of the mouth should be close together so that the air comes out only through the circular center opening. Avoid stretching the lower lip too much against the lower teeth which would allow air to escape through the corners of the mouth and prevent the production of a concentrated, mellow tone. It is also necessary to avoid exerting too much pressure with the lower jaw as this makes for a pinched tone. The tip of the mouthpiece should extend into the mouth approximately one-half inch behind the teeth, the exact amount depending on the bite of the player and the thickness of the lips. In covering the teeth, use as little of the lips as possible to avoid irritation of the inner membranes by the teeth. The fibers closest to the edge of the lips are tougher and less liable to become irritated.

In general, the clarinet should be held at a forty-degree angle from the body. This is not a figure set arbitrarily by me but one which allows for the air column to follow the path of least resistance. However, the actual angle is determined by the relationship between the upper and lower teeth. One who has a protruding jaw will increase the degree of angle; one who has a receding jaw will decrease that angle. Experiment with raising and lowering the clarinet angle as you blow. You will be surprised to notice the difference in quality at different angles.